Hardship caused to Indian students in Russia

1631. SHRI RAJ MOHAN GANDHI:
SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:
SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian students in the Republics of the former Soviet Union are facing financial and other hardships;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government of India to reduce the hardship?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir. The difficulties are being faced by Indian students in the former USSR as a result of the radical economic and political restructuring that has taken place there.

(b) The difficulties faced include:

(i) demand for payment of tuition fee in hard currency by the Institutes;

(ii) inadequate increases in stipend amount being paid by institutes;

(iii) exorbitant increase in rouble airfare from Moscow to Delhi and difficulties in the ticketing arrangement including obtaining confirmed seats; and

(iv) difficulties in obtaining foodstuffs and other essentials mainly on account of increase in rouble prices and the general problem of shortages.

(c) Several steps have been taken including:

(i) release of US $ 50 p.m. student already studying the former USSR against deposit of equivalent rupees in India;

(ii) issue of pre-paid ticket advice on Air India against payment in Indian rupees for students wishing to travel to India;

(iii) arranging repatriation whereever necessary, as per Government regulations; and

(iv) facilitating transit arrangements in Moscow for students in need and affected by civil disturbances as, for example, in Georgia.

Diplomatic relations with South Africa

1632. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to start diplomatic relations with South Africa; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) India is closely monitoring the developments in South Africa. A decision to start diplomatic relations with South Africa will be taken once we are convinced that the process of dismantling apartheid has become irreversible.

जे०के०एल०एफ० के मार्च को पाक अधिकृत कश्मीर द्वारा उकसाया जाना

1633. श्री रामजेठ मलानी :
सरदार जगजीत सिंह अरोड़ा :

क्या विदेश मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान 15 फरवरी, 1992 के "हिन्दुस्तान टाइम्स"